

TOP AGENT

MAGAZINE



Jade Mills

by Alyson Pitarre



With Integrity

Who is Jade Mills? To the Wall Street Journal, she is the No. 7 residential real estate agent in the Nation. To many fellow luxury real estate agents, she is “a consummate professional” who “always puts her clients’ best interests first.” And to her clients, many of whom can be found in the pages of InStyle magazine and the Los Angeles Business Journal, she is one of the most honest, respected and upbeat luxury real estate agents on L.A.’s fashionable Westside. Haute Living magazine once called her a “virtuoso”...and it’s not hard to see why. She not only consistently sells multi-million dollar properties and strategically navigates complex transactions with finesse, but her full-service office advises clients on design ideas, supplies or refers all services necessary to prepare a home for listing and assists them to ensure their property is kept in great condition from beginning to end. During neg-

otiations, Jade is also known for ardently protecting her clients and solving problems of any magnitude to ensure that “all parties feel like they are getting a fair deal.” Yet, if you were to ask Jade who Jade Mills is, she steers the conversation to a topic she likes: her clients.

“I do everything I can to make them feel satisfied when escrow closes,” says Jade. “At the end of the day, if they’re happy, I’m happy.”

Throughout her 30 years in the real estate industry, Jade has filtered her business through the lens of this simple philosophy. She is revered among clients and peers for her honesty, professionalism and sincerity. Her reputation has enabled her to build a powerful network with other real estate agents, many of whom call her to ask for advice on listings or invite her to co-list

properties with them. As a true expert in the luxury housing market, she also speaks at real estate seminars, new agent training sessions and corporate events across the country. People have called her everything from “passionate” and “loyal” to “a positive dealmaker.”

Jade’s full-service team consists of executive assistant Stephanie Zebik, buyer’s agents Spencer Payson and Sara Schwartz, and executive director Michael LaMontagna (who is also her son-in-law). Jade’s real estate golden rule is “to do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” She notes: “It’s about doing what’s right, even if there is a chance we might lose a client or a sale.”

Perhaps her honesty is one reason why she has sold over \$1 billion in residential real estate in the last seven years—a milestone few individual real estate agents will ever reach over the course of their entire career. She has been consistently ranked among the top producing agents, she is an honored member of Coldwell Banker’s Society of Excellence, and was the company’s No. 1 real estate agent in Beverly Hills and the 3rd most successful team in the nation. While these accolades are career highlights, they are still outshined by the fact that she has had the opportunity to work with each of her children. Jade’s eldest daughter Tiffany Barcena works as a real estate agent in Pacific Palisades; her son Zachary Quittman is an agent in Malibu; Alexis LaMontagna is an agent and a successful clothing designer; and the verdict is still out on 16-year-old son Austin. (She is also a grandmother to Charli, Boden, Konah and Scarlett.)

For many of her clients, the experience of buying or selling a home is an intensely personal family affair—just as it is for Jade. In addition to her children, she works closely with her husband Adam, who builds and designs homes throughout

Los Angeles. He also designs and develops Jade’s business and marketing plans.

“My clients love the fact that my family works with me and supports me,” she says. “I think it gives them a little comfort to know that I am so close with my family, and will treat their family and home with high regard. Between my husband’s work as a designer and my own knowledge of buyers and sellers needs, we truly offer them a full-service real estate experience.”

This is a source of great pride for Jade because she can assist her clients in each property she represents. In fact, she has been known to place buyers in homes that might have been out of their original scope of vision. “It’s really about understanding people,” she explains.

Her understanding of people was the very quality that caught the attention of Spike Dresser, a real estate broker who sold Jade’s house in Sherman Oaks in 1975. At the time, she was a single mother and a working commercial actress, but she wanted an occupation that was more stable. After earning her real estate license a few months later, she took a position at Booker Realty in Sherman Oaks, working under Dresser. Her first sale was a \$42,000 home in Van Nuys—a far cry from her premier listing of the moment, a \$68.5 million Beverly Hills estate on Sunset Boulevard. Recalls Jade: “Spike gave me the confidence to work with anyone.”

Today, this quiet inner confidence has helped Jade amass a business portfolio that is almost entirely based on referrals and repeat business. One Beverly Hills family has even bought and sold a record of seven properties with Jade over the last ten years (which perhaps says more about their own confidence in Jade). Jade also possesses the confidence of a REALTOR® who has mastered the fine art of luxury home marketing. She draws from

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circumstances. A deeply experienced broker knows each side's trigger points."

At the negotiating table, she shows equal poise by knowing when it's appropriate to counter offer ("always!"), and making sure both buyer and seller walk away feeling positive about the transaction. Whether she is selling a \$20 million estate or a \$700,000 high-rise condo in Century City, she follows one maxim: do the right thing for the client.

"I do not set monetary goals," she says. "My goal is to have my buyer or seller happy and satisfied with the property they buy or sell. That's more important than anything else."

Clients, friends, family, community—these are the motivations for Jade, and the essence of who she is. As a 30-year Beverly Hills resident, she has been a long-time supporter of the Beverly Hills School System. She is also a strong advocate of several charitable organizations in her community. Currently, she sits on the Board of Governors at Cedars-Sinai and the Board for the Aviva Family and Child Services, a school and residential treatment center for at-risk teenage girls that honored Jade in 2007 for her charitable work. When she is not selling real estate, she is taking trips to Palm Springs or Cabo San Lucas with her family, or practicing yoga and meditation three times a week.

Today, Jade attributes her personal and career success to her mother's positive reinforcement and instilled confidence. With her positive attitude, love for people and embrace of the golden rule, she feels grateful for her fulfilled life. Concludes Jade: "My way of life, and the way I work, is based on my faith and my beliefs."



an email database of highly qualified potential buyers, sellers and investors from all over the world.

"We do not market all high-end homes in newspapers these days," she says. "It's really about networking with real estate agents and knowing who the buyers are."

In today's complex real estate climate, this level of expertise is vital to completing transactions with Jade's signature style and grace. Clients want brokers who have the top percentage of the market share because "knowledge and experience consummate the transaction," according to Jade. Since the majority of today's deals are complicated, every part of every deal is important. Fortunately for Jade's clients, she is 100 percent dedicated to closing the deal—whether it means jumping on a plane to meet a client face-to-face or waking up at four in the morning to make an international call.

"Knowledge is crucial," she explains. "Every seller and buyer has a unique set of financial